was called, and the couple were left alone, while outside the villagers danced and sang all night.

In the morning the man's brothers came to the house to find out if she had ever been to the hammock with another man.

"What happens if they find that she has?"

Bayo's reply was prompt. "Usually nothing. The man doesn't give her as many presents as he would have given her. If he had promised her thirty pengi, he would only give her fourteen. If he liked her, he wouldn't turn her away."

"What would happen to her, though? Would they punish her?"

"They say, Bob's, sometimes a man likes her better for it. It shows him other men had cared for her. But her family scolds her, and sometimes punishes her, too, and the women of the village talk plenty. They pull their lip at her the next morning, and later, whenever there is a quarrel, they talk about it again."

But if the girl were found to have been a virgin, then all the people danced, and there was a great feast, with dances to all the gods.

"You must come back for my wedding, Bob's, you and your women. Then you will see dancing!"

"But your girl is still a child, Bayo."

"Ah, no. She is getting her cote on her thighs. She wears a cloth." He knew, because on his way down from the Governor he had stopped at her village and when the family was not about he had made sure. "If you come next year, we will both be ready."

The two men still followed the bush trail when Bayo had finished his account of how the marriage was conducted. Now and then Tyson would appear, wag his tail, and be off into the undergrowth again.

"Tell me, Bayo," the white man began, "do many girls go with a man to the hammock before they are married?"

He waited for a moment before he answered. Smiling, he ran his hand over his newly braided head with the innumerable little braids between the lines of white.

"Most not of them," Bayo said.

important enough to be the residence of a rice chief. His chief's magic was strong, and, being well past middle age, he could afford to speak of these matters with the whites, for like all Bush Negroes he was proud of the black man's ebia.

"Ya-hai, white man, ebia may well puzzle you. It is no small matter. No man knows all there is to know about ebia. The greatest of ebia men is never done learning. You say you spent more than twenty years learning your kind of work. Twenty years is nothing. All his life an ebia man spends learning. The ancestors let him see a little at a time, and a little more. 'One step at a time,' as the G'aman' says. So it is, white man."

When did the learning begin, we asked him?

"In the bush here, children see what we do, and they learn much by watching. They learn to recognize the kind of ebias a man wears, they learn to know the names of ebias, and about the *ebiwe*—taboos—that go with the wearing of ebias. That is the beginning." All children knew that, but only boys could aspire to learn the secrets of ebia.

A boy's definite training in these things began with adolescence. The ceremony was not formal, for it concerned only the boy and his immediate relatives. When the time came to teach the novice about the gods, his father and his mother's brothers met with him, and they held a lesson. Other men also came, men of the village and elders of their great family. The outsiders sat by and said nothing, while the instruction was carried on by the father and the boy's maternal uncles.

"First the father gives him his gods, and he tells his son the name of each god and how he must serve him."

There were songs to be learned and dances and invocations; there were the offerings which had to be made, and the manner of prayer memorized. He was told when he might call on the god and what names the god bore, for each god had several names, just as had each human being. There were many names to learn for the gods—their day names, their "strong" names.

So it was with each god, until the boy was ready to be initiated into the Komosori Society.

"There are many, many knots, white man, for a boy has much to learn."

When those who directed the knots were satisfied that the boy had learned how to serve the gods he had been given, that he knew their powers, and those things which were hateful to them and would incur their displeasure, then a dance was held for him so that he might demonstrate before the assembled Isoiro villagers that he was ready for manhood.

"We give a big play for a boy who gets his gods for the first time. When the gods come to him at this dance at the bidding of the drum, and he dances hard, then his family is pleased. When a boy dances, then we know what is in him. We know whether his gods are strong, whether he is to be feared."

Once the father had transferred his gods to his son, he did not dance much himself. He might continue to play the drum at sacred dances, but dancing and drumming were for the younger men. His son's worship of the gods through the dance released the father for the study of skin. With the governing elders, the father took up his rôle as a class member who sought the will of the ancestors when new tasks were to be undertaken.

"What happens if the father has few gods to give his son?" we asked.

"Then his mother's eldest brother gives his to the boy."

"What if the boy's uncle has none to give?"

That happened so seldom that he could not remember such an instance, but he had heard it said that this had occurred once or twice.

"A man must have gods to help him live. If his family can give him none, then they buy gods for him. Sometimes there are gods in the family that are not too strong, and they want the boy to have strong gods. They go to a man who knows about such things and who himself has strong gods and buy a god for the boy from him."

[illegible]

A man who wished to buy a god for his son went to a sacrificial chief man and agreed to pay him a certain sum of money if, at the end of the period of training, the god came to the boy.

"When the chief man says the boy is ready, they give a dance. At this dance, the drum is played for the god, and the boy must dance. If the god comes to him, then the chief man gets his money, but if the god does not come, then he does not get what was promised him, because they had made an agreement for a god, and no god came."

The training was not very difficult—it was not like the training for becoming an *obia* man. A boy was given *obia* water to wash in. Every eight days the water in the *obia* pot was changed, and this bathing continued for three months. When the ritual of purification was over, he was taught the drum rhythms of the god, the invocations which the drum sounded, and the spoken invocations. Songs, and make-up for the dancing, and the dancing itself he was taught, and when he might call upon the god, and what he must do when the god comes, and what offerings the god was to receive. If the god spoke "tongues," he was also instructed in the appropriate language. There were the words of the mocking little Apuku gods and the sounds which only Tené people made, and there was the "Kromanti tongs."

"Can all the gods be bought?" we asked.

"Kwei, kwei!" he shook his head in emphatic denial. "The river gods cannot be bought. You are born a Tené man or woman, or the Tené god comes to you from your family. But all the Vodu gods you can buy; and the god Bongo, the alligator; and the ant hill gods and the gods of the kankan tree, and the Apuku bush gods." He paused for an instant, as if he were considering something. "And men buy Kromanti for their sons, if they have none to give them. Almost every man in the bush has Kromanti. If he hasn't it, then he tries to buy it for his sons. A man needs Kromanti. When he has the Kromanti spirit, fire cannot hurt him, nor glass, nor anything that cuts—

the tasks which will fall to his lot when he reaches adulthood. Half in play, the boys and girls help their elders and in that way learn how to work, how to conduct themselves, how to sing and dance, how to make divinations, and how to pray to the gods. What they learn when they come by their gods is also taught them by members of their family. A boy's father and maternal uncles instruct him in the gods they give him. A girl is made familiar with the will of her gods and their manner of worship when her mother and her mother's sisters give their gods to her. Knowledge is, therefore, shared in the family, and much of it, the Bush Negro says, comes to each individual from his gods, since not every boy who watches a line carver can steal the carving of his master. When he does show promise of excellence at a given task, it is because he, too, has a god who helps him do his carving. It is the same with drumming, and singing, and telling stories, and making love.

But obia is learned formally and slowly. An obia man may teach his own brother, or his sister's eldest son, or his own son, even, what he knows, but the learning process will be gradual, for no man may disclose too much to an unrelated mind. At times, however, an obia man trains men who are not related to him. He may himself decide upon a young man of promise to whom he cares to impart his knowledge. A considerable sum of money may be offered him by members of an influential family who wish to have an obia man of their own kin and who send a young man to him for training. In a dream or during possession it may become known that the ancestors wish a certain young man to apprentice himself to the obia man they name.

The apprenticeship lasts from three months to a year. The novice goes to live with the obia man, working with him and observing all that his master does. During this period of intensive training he goes with the obia man into the bush and is shown the herbs which heal. He is trained in the manner of bathing for the *ati'o*—the soul—

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

and how to cure fever, and fio-fio. He is shown how to make obia medicine for lesions of the skin, and for colds, and for diseases of children. He is taught the protective obias for the woman who conceives, and those which help conception, the obias which keep people safe on the river, and those which guard them in the bush against enemy spirits.

It may be, too, that during this first period of training, the initiate is shown how to trap and treat the snakes from which the snake "cuttee" is made. This cure for snake bite is famous in Suriname among Bush Negroes and whites alike, but the secret of preparing the cuttee is known to the Bush Negroes alone.

While the young man is in training, he may not go with a woman, and there are many more prohibitions which he must observe.

"Not all men can become obia men."

"Does a man need obia in order to have Kromanti?" we asked.

"To have Obia Kromanti, yes. . . . Now do not ask about Kromanti, white man," said Bayo's uncle with a smile. "Only a Kromanti man knows about Kromanti. Do not ask, because I cannot tell you."

5

Men and women constantly drifted to our base camp with carvings for our collection. Many brought us obias. Some of these obias they took from their persons and sold to us, but others were newly made for us, for some of those they themselves wore, they would not part with, whatever the inducement.

"Why do you want my obia, white man?" a Bush Negro asked one day. "Do you want an obia to carry you well to your country? I will make one for you, but do not ask for mine. Mine has kept me in good health. I cannot give away an obia which has served me well. The spirits would be angered."

He returned after a day with one which resembled his own, and as he gave it, he placed it on the upturned palms

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

were born, such as Monday-child, Tuesday-child, and so on.

The boys of about seven to ten years of age form themselves into groups and play at hunting or fishing, or canter in and out of the village. There seems to be very little organized game playing among the children. For that matter the adults have no organized games aside from that of gambling with the *adji-boto* board. The little girls play at house making, or follow pursuits of a less arduous nature than do the boys, and to them in particular is given the care of the young children, although the boys often do their share in this matter. The arts of hunting, fishing, canoe work, and jungle craft in general are usually taught the boy by his maternal uncle, or by some other male relative of his mother's family, and less often by his actual father. At irregular intervals there are canoe races, and the young men indulge in wrestling as a pastime.

We know of no initiatory rites for ceremonially admitting children into the tribe at puberty. Among the Aucaners, however, the boy does undergo a slight ceremonial to indicate that he is at last a full-fledged adult. Most of the children of both sexes are entirely nude, and no notice is taken of the fact. At about the age of ten the boy begins wearing around his waist a string of singrassi, in anticipation of a loin-cloth. When the maternal uncle judges that the boy is old enough, he stands the boy up before the entire village, assembled for the purpose, and gives him a loin-cloth and camissa. But first the uncle rips off any cloth that happens to be on the boy's body and draws attention to his nudity. Everyone is told to

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

881 have a last look at the child's penis, as they will never see it again. Then the boy is proclaimed a man, and given clothes.

So far as could be observed, there is no circumcision of either the male or female, although such mutilations are indulged in by West African tribes in the region from which the Djukas came. The girls wear only the *coyo*, or a larger cloth known as *pangi*, until their first menstruation, when their mothers give them cloths. This is done in private. Menstruating women are required to leave their homes and retire
841 to a separate hut situated outside the village on a by-path; they may not return until three days after the period is over. Under no condition are they allowed to go to the provision fields during this time.

584 At the age of about sixteen or seventeen the children are
[582] ready to be married. Sometimes they are betrothed in infancy, and occasionally a pregnant woman will betroth her child before it is born, conditionally, of course, upon its sex. Once the child is betrothed the ceremony must take place,
[754] otherwise the disappointed prospective mate will call down a *kunu*, or curse, on the entire perjured family, and they will all die. The pubescent child does not look forward to marriage as time for leaving its family, nor is marriage an
[581] initiation into sex relations. For these two reasons, getting
[348] married is not a serious step, and there is little illegitimacy because there is no reason for objecting to a marriage.

858 Youths must remain standing until their elders invite them
576 to be seated. It is customary for older people to receive much
888 respectful attention, for the older people are the sources of tradition and authority

6:Hurault--85 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Boni

/61/

1937	Mission to determine the trijunction point of the frontiers of French Guiana-Brazil-Surinam.
1939	Declaration of war.
1944-45	Not a precise point of reference. The Boni confuse the liberation of the territory with the end of the war.
1948	First I.G.N. mission.
1949	Mr. Aubert de la Rüe's mission; second I.G.N. mission.
1952	Third I.G.N. mission. /blank page/ /63/

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The social institutions of the Refugee Blacks diverge noticeably from those of the African peoples from whom they issued. They do not include age grades, men's societies, or initiation; marriage involves neither a contract between kin groups nor "dowry."

In a general way these societies founded by rebel slaves who had retained an extreme horror of all oppression were organized so as not to have any material constraint weigh upon the individual. Their institutions are entirely founded on the idea of protection against suprahuman perils; the individual remains perfectly free, and he adheres /to these institutions/ only in proportion as he is conscious of these perils. The custom of the Refugee Blacks, devoid of any means of material coercion, tends to develop within the individual the feeling that he is constantly threatened.

/68 cont./

613 624 [562] The basia are the mouthpieces of the captain, and not at all deputies having specific authority over a definite fraction of the village. There are three or four per village; in addition there are one or two women basia through whom the village head commands the work reserved for the women.

613 554 241 282 The head of the lineage possesses no religious powers over the land. The Refugee Blacks assume that the fertility of the soil depends exclusively on local divinities, to whom each one prays on his own behalf.

613 554 681 The captain, no more than the council, does not have the right to expel a member from the lineage, even for marked unworthiness. This is one of the most remarkable aspects of the legal conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, tied to the idea that a lineage represents only one single life. There again the thought of the Refugee Blacks can be regarded as the extreme opposite of the thought of the Bamiléké, with whom the head alone retains possession of the rights over the land, expulsion constituting the supreme social sanction.

881 Initiation; age classes; men's society. These African institutions seem totally unknown to the Refugee Blacks. No form of initiation of adolescents exists, and no ceremony marks collectively their [304] entrance into social life. Circumcision and excision are not [852] practiced. For the children, boys and girls, there are two stages: [561] that of the first garment, which is given upon the appearance of the pubic hair, at about 12-13 years, without ceremony, and the end of education which coincides with marriage.

561 The society of the Refugee Blacks rests however in large part on age hierarchy; strictly speaking there are no age classes involving a fixed organization, but they exist tacitly: